

What You Need To Know About Reach Up

Mission: Reach Up joins families on their journey to overcome obstacles, explore opportunities, improve their finances and reach their goals.

Vision: Families will be empowered, connected and thriving.

What is required of me?

- You and your case manager will create a plan that maps out your goals and the steps you will take to achieve them.
- You'll need to spend a certain number of hours each week participating in activities that help you reach your goals and may lead to a job.
- You'll be required to meet regularly with a Reach Up team member(s). If you can't make an appointment, you must call ahead of time to reschedule.

What else should I know?

- Reach Up team members will help you develop goals for your family and employment. Together, you will write a "Family Development Plan".
- You may be eligible for financial supports related to the activities in your Family Development Plan (e.g., gas money for job search, car repairs, and clothing for a job or job interview). There are dollar limits on all of these supports, and you must get prior approval.
- While on Reach Up, any child support you get will be assigned to the state and included in the amount of your benefit payment.
- Benefits will usually be issued on the 1st and 16th of the month (or all on the 1st if child support is collected by the state.)
- A Benefits Program Specialist will determine the amount of your grant and issue benefits. If you have questions about your benefits or need to report a change, call 1-800-479-6151.
- Your Reach Up grant may be reduced or closed if you do not participate.

What happens after your Reach Up grant closes?

- If your Reach Up grant closes because you go to work, you *may* still be eligible for supports for up to 6 months.
- When your Reach Up or PSE grant closes, you'll automatically be signed up for Reach Ahead if you are eligible. Reach Ahead will provide the following benefits for up to 24 months: support to help you keep a job, child care subsidy, and a cash benefit to help you buy food.

What happens if you've received more than 60 countable months of Reach Up?

- If you're applying for Reach Up and have already received 60 countable months of Reach Up/TANF, you'll need to meet your work requirement for two consecutive weeks after you meet with your case manager or apply for and be found eligible for a deferment, before your application can be granted.
- Once you reach your lifetime limit of 60 countable months on Reach Up, you may get benefits only if you are fully meeting the program requirements. Your case manager will let you know what your work requirement is.
- You can meet your work requirement through employment and/or by participating in countable activities.
- If you are unable to work or meet your full work requirement, you must discuss your situation with your case manager. You may be given a deferment or be required to meet a modified work requirement.
- If you qualify for a deferment, you may be eligible for benefits as long as you're addressing the issues that are preventing you from working.
- If at least one parent in a two-parent household has received 60 countable months of Reach Up, both parents must fully meet program requirements to continue getting assistance.
- Any months of TANF received in another state since July 2001 counts towards your 60-month limit in Vermont.
- The months you were on Reach Up in any other household may count toward your time limits.
- If your Reach Up ends because you did not fully meet program requirements, you chose to withdraw from the program, or for other reasons, you still may be eligible for food benefits, health care, fuel, and catastrophic General Assistance as long as you meet those program requirements.
- If your Reach Up benefits end because you did not meet the program requirements and you did not have a good reason, you will not be eligible for Reach Up again for two full months after your Reach Up grant closes. You will also not be eligible for non-catastrophic General Assistance during this time.

